MINUTES OF SANTON DOWNHAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

HELD ON MONDAY 7th JULY 2025 2025 AT 7.30 PM

**Present:** Mr Michael Mackender (Chairman)

Mr Andrew Butcher (Vice Chairman)

Mrs Sylvia East (Parish Clerk)

Mrs Ann Landells (Parish Councillor)

Mr Paul Brown

Mr Adrian Baugh

There were four members of the public present from the village and Cllr Victor Lukanuik (County Councillor)

1. The Chairman welcomed all in attendance
2. **Apologies** were received from Mr Kim Daplyn (Parish Councillor) , Mr Phil Whittam and

Ms Jools Savage (District Councillors)

1. **Declaration of interest** on items on the Agenda. There were none.
2. **Minutes of the AGM held on Monday, 12th May,** 2025 were signed as correct
3. **Parish Clerk’s Report**

Update on Accounts

The Clerk advised the account as at balance on 6th July stands at £18,711.62. Advised the building

insurance had been paid and both the Village Hall and the Club had paid their proportionate

contributions. It was also confirmed the latest VAT reclaim had been received and the Village Hall

repaid the amount applicable to them. As clarified on the Agenda, the final accounts have been

input onto the website.

Payments recently made

The Clerk reported as above a payment of £1,356.65 made for the building insurance and asked

that a payment of £828.00 be made to Jetforce Ltd to cover the work recently carried out on the

drain at Marks Lane. This was agreed and the Clerk will now make this payment online.

Litter Picking

The Clerk gave a vote of thanks to Mary and Bob Pritchard for organising the first of these

Litter Picks which had been a very successful beginning. The Clerk remarked on the community

Spirit and how good it was to see West Suffolk had picked up the bags relatively quickly.

Resignation of a Parish Councillor

The Clerk confirmed that Mrs Debbie Cock has now made the decision to resign. It was reported

there is no Legal requirement for the Parish Council to fill this void at this time, however, should

there be interest then any possible candidates may apply to the Clerk in writing and this will be

taken forward. If there is more than one candidate all would be interviewed by the Parish

Council and a choice made.

1. **Chairman asked whether the Councillors had anything to report**

In general none of the Councillors had anything to report but Mr Butcher reminded the Chairman of the one or two trees that were requiring attention. The Chairman replied saying he and the Clerk had been discussing this matter and agreed this needed to be taken forward. With regard to the ‘dead’ tree on the other side of Hall Drive, the Clerk concurred she would take pictures of this and put in a planning application to have this removed.

1. **Chairman to invite our County Councillor and District Councillors to report on any matters**

Cllr Lukanuik commented on how much he had enjoyed the Classic Car event run by the Village Hall and said he was looking forward to a repeat next year. He raised the issue of speeding down

Green Road and asked the Parish Council what the running costs and installation costs were for the speed cameras in Santon Downham. The Chairman and Clerk both advised in turn, that the

SAD/PC07.07.25(1)

full cost had been just over some £5k and that this covered the purchase and installation. The Chairman advised the installation had been carried out inhouse. Todate there have been no maintenance costs and everything is running smoothly and efficiently. Cll Lukanuik also commented on the fact the Forestry had been ‘scraping the earth floor’ in the Harland Drove area and wondered why this had been undertaken during the nesting season. This concern was also made generally by the Parish Council and it was agreed would be passed onto Forestry England when a meeting was arranged.

1. **Chairman’s Report**

The Chairman advised that shortly before the meeting he had been approached by a villager who asked what the situation was with regard to the vegetation cut back behind his house. It was agreed the vegetation to which he referred was the responsibility of Forestry England and the Chairman advised shortly a meeting was to be held with Mr Duncan Slade and this and any other Forestry issues will be raised.

Plug in Initiative

The Chairman referred to an email received from West Suffolk and the Clerk read this out. To put this in a nutshell, Connected Kerb are looking at the additional costs that would be incurred if the meters and mast were to be placed towards the rear of the village hall. Reading between the lines if the cost of the location proves too high, the question to be asked is if the Parish Council would be happy to return to the original concept closer to the road. It was generally agreed this would not be acceptable since originally the Parish Council had not been aware of the size of the mast. We will await the outcome.

Planned works by the Forestry on the old Nursery area

The Parish Council have been advised that work will commence in this area, undertaken by

R G Carter Ltd. These works will take place over some 30 weeks commencing 07.30 hrs to 17.00 hours Monday to Friday. The works are to erect agricultural barns to store machinery and to create a dedicated staff car park.

Forestry Car Park Entrance

The Chairman commented on the concerns by villagers living close to the Forestry Offices about the possibility of those households who have to use the entrance to the Forestry in order to access their homes, which of course also covers any visitors. The Clerk advised Forestry had stated the cameras were to pick up only those entering and using the car park, however, this is a matter that needs to be more fully investigated and would be raised during a meeting with Duncan Slade.

1. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on Monday, 6th October with the proviso that should there be

any important issues in between, then an emergency meeting could be called.

1. The Chairman asked the Parish Councillors to remain behind to discuss the question of the Village Hall possibly seeking full charity registration through the Charities Commission. The Clerk clarified the Village Hall at this time is being managed by a Village Hall Committee under the Parish Council mantle as a Not for Profit / Recreational Charities Act 1958 but that given the immense changes we have seen and will continue to see, it was a worthy consideration. The meeting therefore was to clarify the way forward which of course was an issue for the Parish Council to discuss and not one that required public participation. The Chairman asked

Cllr Lukanuik if he cared to remain as he would be able to offer his vast experience to the discussion.

1. The meeting closed at 8.15 pm

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